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Letter dated 24 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit a statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic in relation to the farfetched Azerbaijani accusation of the alleged use of prohibited ammunition (see annex).

I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Zohrab **Mnatsakanyan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 24 May 2016 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic

20 May 2016

On 17 May, the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry voiced another farfetched accusation of the alleged use of prohibited ammunition, including shells with white phosphorus, during the military operations from 2 to 5 April 2016.

Continuing its usual campaign of disinformation to the international community, Azerbaijan does not disdain to resort to fraud and outright manipulation. To add weight to its propaganda, the Azerbaijani side tries to involve foreign diplomats and military attachés accredited in Azerbaijan.

Falsification and distortion of reality have long been regular, constituting an integral part of Azerbaijan's foreign policy. In 1992, the Azerbaijani side made similar accusations regarding the alleged use of chemical weapons, which were then denied by the United Nations special fact-finding mission. Based on the findings and conclusions of the United Nations experts set forth in the report of the Security Council dated 24 July 1992, the Secretary-General noted that "no evidence of the use of chemical weapons had been presented to the team" (see S/24344).

In subsequent years, the Azerbaijani side has made similar absurd and unconfirmed accusations, including the use of nuclear weapons against Azerbaijan in 1993, the disposal of nuclear wastes in the Nagorno Karabakh Republic (the NKR) (PACE document N9444 dated 7 May 2002), the transformation of Armenia and the NKR to a depot for bacteriological weapons (PACE document N9336 dated 31 January 2002), the cultivation and production of drugs, and so on. In doing so, the Azerbaijani side referred to non-existent scientific journals, reports, organizations and laboratories.

Resurrecting its old allegations, Azerbaijan not only tries to justify its policy of use of force and denial of full and strict compliance with the ceasefire agreements of 1994 and 1995, on which the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chair countries insist, but also aims to distract attention from the real war crimes committed by the Azerbaijani army against the military servicemen and civilian population of the NKR.

In this regard, we call upon the international community to treat the unfounded statements of the Azerbaijani side with utmost criticism.

For its part, the NKR is ready to host a special monitoring mission for an on-site study of all the facts and an investigation of the circumstances of the aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan from 2 to 5 April 2016, as well as the violations of the norms of international humanitarian law committed during that period.